

REMARKS

Claims 3-24 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 6, 9, 15 and 20 are amended. In addition, the specification is amended to correct typographical errors. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims, and the drawings. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Unless otherwise indicated in the remarks set forth below, the amendments to the claims are made for the purpose of correcting informalities and/or to more clearly define the claimed invention, and not are made for the purpose of overcoming the cited art.

Entry of the amended claims is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendments: (1) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (2) do not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration (since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution without incorporating additional subject matter); (3) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; and/or (4) place the application in better form for appeal (if necessary). Entry is thus requested.

Applicant appreciates the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative, René A. Vázquez, during the December 14, 2004 personal Interview. The substance of the personal interview is incorporated in the Remarks set forth below.

Applicant appreciates the Patent Office's indication that claims 3-5 and 10-14 are allowable.

The Office Action rejects claims 9, 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,600,265 to Ebihara et al. (hereinafter "Ebihara"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 9 and 20 recite *inter alia*, a display region comprising a plurality of discharge cells, and a protective layer provided on an upper substrate only in the display region so as to cover substantially the entire display region, and wherein the protective layer does not extend into the non-display region. As discussed during the personal interview, Ebihara does not teach or suggest these features.

As shown in Figure 1 of Ebihara, the protecting layer 6 extends beyond the first and last protective barriers 10, which is what defines the boundaries of the display region in the present invention. Further, the language in column 4, lines 63-65, which the Office Action refers to as support for the protecting layer 6 extending beyond the display region, does not preclude the layer from extending beyond the display region. The language the Office Action refers to merely states that the protecting layer 6 covers the portion of the dielectric layer 4 corresponding to the display region. It does not say that the protecting layer does not extend beyond the display region.

During the personal interview, the Examiner suggested that we should perhaps amend claim 9 to specifically define the term "display region". However, upon further consideration and review of the specification, Applicant respectfully submits that the term "display region" is sufficiently defined in the specification, and the claims should always be read in light of the

specification. For example, in Figure 9 of the present application, the display region 70 is clearly marked. It extends, along the direction parallel to the sustain electrodes 74Y and 74Z, from the first barrier rib 52 to the last barrier rib 52. Because the "display region" is specifically and sufficiently defined in the specification, Applicant respectfully submits that there is no need to further define the term in claims 9 and 20.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that Ebihara fails to anticipate the subject matter of claims 9 and 20. Claim 21 depends from claim 20 and is thus also allowable for at least the same reasons, as well as for the additional features it recites. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 6-8, 15-19, 23 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,674,553 to Shinoda et al. (hereinafter "Shinoda"), in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,259,505 to Makino (hereinafter "Makino"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action alleges that Shinoda discloses a plasma display panel comprising a sustaining electrode pair of transparent conductive material provided on an upper substrate, a plurality of barrier ribs formed on a lower substrate in a direction crossing the sustaining electrode pair and a display region comprising a plurality of discharge cells coexisting with a non-display region provided at an outer periphery of the display region. The Office Action admits, however, that Shinoda fails to teach or suggest that matrices are provided in the non-display region.

To remedy this, the Office Action alleges that Makino discloses the use of black matrices in the non-display region of a plasma display panel. The Office Action then concludes that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide black matrices at the non-display region of the plasma display panel disclosed by Shinoda, because it prevents light from migrating into the non-display region and thereby improves the clarity and contrast of the image display.

As discussed during the personal interview, Makino does not disclose the use of black matrices in a non-display region of a plasma display panel. In fact, Makino is directed to a way of increasing the amount of UV-rays that is supplied to a sealing member during manufacture of a liquid crystal apparatus or other apparatus that involves bonding of two substrates with a UV-ray curable sealing member. See, for example, column 15, line 61 to column 16, line 4, in which Makino describes that with his invention, "since the outer periphery of the UV-ray shielding member such as the overcoat or the frame-shaped light shielding member is formed so that the portion which corresponds to the corner portion of the sealing member has a curved shape or a shape having obtuse angles, a large gap between the UV-ray shielding and a sealing member can be sufficiently obtained. Accordingly, a sufficient amount of UV-rays can be supplied to the sealing member, resulting in improved quality of the electro-optical apparatus using a UV-ray curable material as a sealing member."

Thus, when Makino indicates that his invention can be applied to a plasma display panel, it is because a plasma display panel can be manufactured using a UV-ray curable sealing member.

There is certainly no motivation or teaching in Makino that the frame-shaped light shielding member used in the context of a liquid crystal display can be positioned in a plasma display panel outside a display region, such that light produced by discharge between sustaining electrode pairs in the non-display region can be blocked out of the display region.

Shinoda is directed to a full color three electrode surface discharge type plasma display panel that has fine image elements. To accomplish this, an image element is composed of three unit luminescent areas and address electrodes that intersect the three luminescent areas. Thus, there is no mention in Shinoda of the problem being addressed by the present invention, which is unwanted discharge between sustain electrodes in the non-display area. Accordingly, there is no teaching, suggestion or motivation to take the frame-shaped light shielding member in the liquid crystal display of Makino and place it, not only in a plasma display panel, but positioned such that light produced by discharge between sustaining electrode pairs in a non-display region of the plasma display panel is blocked from entering the display region.

In fact, as shown in Figure 1 of Makino, and discussed in column 7, lines 14-17, the frame-shaped light shielding member 8 is designed to prevent illumination light emitted from the direction of the arrow "C" from leaking to the opposite side. Thus, one looking to Makino for guidance as to how to position the frame-shaped light shielding member in a plasma display panel would see Makino's teachings regarding preventing light from passing from one side of the display to the other side (in a direction perpendicular to the plane of the substrate), rather than teachings directed to how to position a black matrix so that light generated by discharge between

two sustaining electrodes in a non-display region can be kept from entering the display region along a direction that is generally parallel to the substrates.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of Shinoda and Makino fail to render obvious the subject matter of claims 6 and 15. Claims 7, 8 and 23 depend from claim 6, and claims 16-19 and 24 depend from claim 15. Thus, these claims are also allowable for at least the reasons set forth above, as well as for the additional features they recite. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney, **René A. Vázquez, Esq.**, at the telephone number listed below.

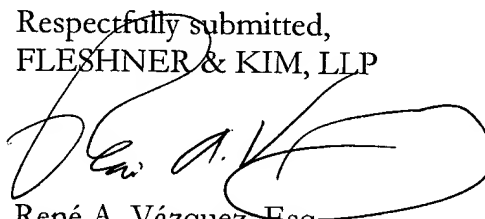
To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this,

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concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and
please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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